

Message Text

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12

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00

FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 OES-06

AGR-05 TRSE-00 IO-13 /059 W
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R 090720Z JUL 76

FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2419

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L LENDING 1089

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BAGB, EGEN, ETRN, UR

SUBJECT: PORT CONGESTION AT LENINGRAD

REF: STATE 165002

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. REVIEW OF CONGEN RECORDS ON ELEVEN GRAIN SHIPS WHICH HAVE ARRIVED LENINGRAD SINCE LATE APRIL CLEARLY INDICATES LENINGRAD PORT SUFFERING INCREASING CONGESTION PROBLEM, WHICH DOES NOT APPEAR BE SERIOUS ONE AS YET. DELAYS APPEAR TO BE LIMITED ONLY TO GRAIN CARRIERS AS SHIPS CARRYING GENERAL CARGO HAVE EXPERIENCED LITTLE OR NO DELAYS TO DATE. END SUMMARY.

2. DELAYS IN RECEIVING U.S. GRAIN SHIPS INITIALLY BECAME APPARENT DURING SECOND WEEK OF MAY AND ALL U.S. SHIPS ARRIVING SINCE THAT TIME HAVE EXPERIENCED DELAYS IN DOCKING. THROUGH MID-MAY, DELAYS AVERAGED ABOUT TEN DAYS, BUT BY JUNE 1 DELAYS INCREASED TO 14-15 DAYS. SINCE JUNE 1 WAITING TIME HAS INCREASED TO ABOUT THREE WEEKS. TWO SHIPS HAVE RECENTLY ARRIVED AND WE WILL REPORT ANY SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THEIR WAITING TIMES.

3. WE ARE UNABLE TO PROVIDE AT THIS TIME EXACT NUMBER OF BERTHS USED FOR OFFLOADING OF GRAIN, BUT SINCE EARLY MAY PORT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO HANDLE MORE THAN THREE U.S. GRAIN CARRIERS AT ONE TIME. HOWEVER, PRESUME SOME SOVIET GRAIN CARRIERS AND
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POSSIBLY THIRD-NATIONAL VESSELS ALSO BEING OFFLOADED

SIMULTANEOUSLY.

4. RATE OF DISCHARGE FOR ALL U.S. VESSELS HAS CONSISTENTLY AVERAGED BETWEEN 2500 AND 3000 TONS DAILY PER SHIP. BULK OF OFFLOADING CARRIED OUT BY VACUVATOR INTO HOPPER CARS, BUT SOME OFFLOADING INTO BARGES HAS BEEN USED AS WELL.

5. CONGEN HAS SEEN NO EVIDENCE AS YET OF SHORTAGE OF RAIL CARS OR GRAIN STORAGE FACILITIES. RATES OF DISCHARGE FOR ALL U.S. SHIPS HAVE REMAINED CONSISTENT SINCE EARLY MAY, INDICATING OFFLOADING PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY.

6. AS REQUESTED PARA 3 REFTTEL, FOLLOWING IS LIST OF GRAIN SHIPS ARRIVING LENINGRAD IN 1976 (ALL SINCE APRIL 28):

A. THOMAS M; ACADEMY TANKERS; 27,000 TONS OF CORN

B. EAGLE VOYAGER; SEA TRANSPORT CORP; 29,000 TONS OF CORN

C. THOMAS Q; ACADEMY TANKERS; 28,000 TONS OF CORN

D. EAGLE COURIER; EAGLE TERMINAL TANKERS; 23,500 TONS OF CORN

E. OGDEN YUKON; OGDEN SEA TRANSPORT; 25,000 TONS OF CORN

F. ALLEGIANCE; INTERNATIONAL OCEAN TRANSPORT CORP.; 30,000 TONS OF CORN

G. ZAPATA PATRIOT; ZAPATA BULK TRANSPORT; 33,000 TONS OF CORN

H. CONNECTICUT; OGDEN MARINE; 36,000 TONS OF WHEAT

I. BANNER; INTEROCEAN MANAGEMENT CORP.; 31,000 TONS OF CORN

J. GULF KNIGHT (JUST DOCKED, NO DETAILS YET AVAILABLE)

K. OVERSEAS ALEUTIAN (AWAITING BERTH, NO DETAILS YET AVAILABLE)

7. COMMENT: MASTERS OF U.S. VESSELS HAVE GIVEN US NO INDICATION THAT SOVIETS CONSIDER PROBLEM SERIOUS ONE AS YET. BASED ON OUR CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPERIENCE DURING PORT CONGESTION DURING LATE 1975, LENINGRAD PORT SIMPLY DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH PERSONNEL, SUITABLE BERTHS AND EQUIPMENT SUCH AS VACUVATORS TO HANDLE TEMPORARY SHARP INCREASE IN GRAIN SHIPMENTS. INITIAL SIGNS OF MAJOR PROBLEM WILL LIKELY BE SHORTAGE OF RAIL CARS OR DELAYS IN OFFLOADING CAUSED BY BACK-UP IN STORAGE FACILITIES. CONGEN OFFICER WILL BE VISITING PORT AND MEETING WITH LEADING PORT OFFICIALS DURING VISIT OF FMC CHAIRMAN BAKKE JULY 16 AND WE EXPECT TO BE ABLE

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DETAILS FOLLOWING THESE DISCUSSIONS.

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